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**METHODS AND SYSTEMS FOR RETAIL CLUB MEMBERSHIP**  
**AUTHORIZATION**

This application is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. Application No.  
10/347,731, filed January 21, 2003, <sup>is now U.S. Patent 6,991,160</sup> ~~now pending~~, the entire contents of which are hereby  
1 incorporated by reference.

**Field of the Invention**

The present invention generally relates to systems and methods for remote  
10 authorization of fuel dispensing and authorization or confirmation of participation in frequent  
shopper programs, club memberships, and the like.

**Background of the Invention**

Many gasoline retailers are reporting an increase in gasoline theft, or "drive-offs." A  
15 drive-off occurs whenever an automobile refueling at a remote, enabled fuel dispenser drives  
off without its occupants having paid for the gasoline. Drive-offs cost the industry nearly  
\$300 million a year, which is more than \$3,000 per store selling gas, and it is no longer just  
teenagers taking a few dollars for a thrill. It is now grown adults taking a full tank, which  
costs as much as \$50 when the automobile being filled up is a sport utility vehicle. Many  
20 service station owners make only pennies a gallon. Thus, to make up for a \$10 drive off,  
they have to sell anywhere from two to three hundred gallons of gas. It is money that  
retailers cannot recover or that retailers are forced to pass on to law-abiding customers,  
affecting both gas prices and in-store convenience items such as food and beverages.